

# Ultimate Forgiveness

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God and Christ can forgive all of our sins if we can repent of them. What about us, can you forgive any person of any sin that is against you? Don't be so sure that you are that Holy. Most of us that truly have been called of God would like to think that we could forgive anyone of their sins against us if they truly repented, but as I will explain in this article; most of us have not had to prove this, but in time you probably will.

God revealed to the prophet Daniel that some of the people who do have understanding of the word of God will fall in the process of being tried, tested, and purged. (Dan. 11:35) Since the death of Gods true apostle Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, whom God sent to the end time generation of people on this earth; Gods true church has been in a process of being tried, tested, and purged. God let Satan come into the church to sift out the wheat from the chaff and prove who really does love God and Christ more than anything else. Those of us who have chose to be loyal to Christ and God, have been cast out of the church organizations, and have had our name slandered, as if we were the ones who were unfaithful to Christ. God Almighty knows the difference, and we by faith know that we shall be vindicated in due time if we remain faithful to Christ. I write this article to you brethren who have been faithful, and have not been snared into following after vain ministers, and false prophets, who seek their own glory and wealth.

Brethren, we have proved to God and ourselves that we do love Christ, and will follow him even if it gets us put out of the organizations, but that doesn't mean that we will not have more trials and tests. Jesus gave a parable in John chapter

fifteen, saying that **he is the vine** (*not the organization*) **and we are the branches, and the Father is the husbandman** (*farmer*). You should study this parable. Jesus tells us that if we remain in him we will bear fruit (*fruits like righteous works, growth in righteous character, and love to God, and our fellow man*) but if we don't bear fruit then those branches are taken away to be burned. We who do abide in Christ, and him in us, certainly are bearing righteous works, or fruits, but notice what else Jesus said about us. Verse two says, that every branch in him that **does** bear fruit, he will **purge** it that it may bring forth **more** fruit. Now this purging process can be very painful, but we must remember, it is for our own good, that we may become more perfect and completely holy even as Christ is.

Have you somehow assumed that, since we all started out being sinners and unholy that God doesn't expect us to be as holy as Christ is? Look at Ephesians chapter one, verse four, last part "that we should be **holy** and **without blame** before him in love." Yes that is exactly what God expects of us; to live our lives so that we are without blame, to be completely holy. If we are honest with ourselves, I think that we can see that we do need some purging done to us yet. Perfection in character and love is what God has called us to. "Be you therefore perfect, even as your father who is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5: 48) Yes, God does want us to grow in the knowledge, and character of God, until we are perfect, unto the stature of the fullness of Christ. (Eph. 4:13) God doesn't expect us to become instantly perfect as soon as we are first converted, but he does expect us to strive to be growing in holiness, and to be putting all manner of sin out of our hearts and minds. Brethren, as you well know, God chastens every son that he loves. We are living during the age of final tests, and if God sees some area that we need to grow in, then he will purge us that we may become more perfect. God wants us to be as good as we can possibly be. God doesn't want us to be in need of a strong, righteous leader to keep us on track. When we are born again into the family of God, he wants us to be holy and completely trustworthy so he can rely on us to do only righteousness forever. So when God purges us, he is not trying to make us fail, but to make us become the best we can be. God doesn't want medium rated Christians, but completely dedicated, faithful, zealous, and perfectly righteous children.

Now, with the above information in mind I want to explain something to us about the forgiveness of God. If we truly repent, and confess our sins to God he will forgive us all of our sins, and give us his Holy Spirit to cleanse us of all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:8, 9) (Acts 2:38) Many other scriptures show us God's willingness to forgive us our sins when we truly repent and start obeying God's law. Did you realize that God expects us to forgive others of their sins against us when they repent and ask us to forgive them? (Luke 17: 3, 4) Did you know that if someone does some sin against us; and if we don't forgive them when they repent, then God won't forgive us of our sins? That is pretty scary to think that we may not be forgiven our own sins! Read Matthew chapter six, verses fourteen and fifteen: "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly father will also forgive you: but if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

You may say that you forgive them, but do you really from the heart? You should read the parable that Jesus gave, concerning forgiveness, especially verse 35. (Matt. 18: 21-35) It is fairly easy to forgive someone who has done some minor offence against you, but what if it was some major offence against you and your family? Could you forgive then? I tell you the truth, it would only be possible by the divine Spirit of God working mightily in your life, and then it wouldn't be easy, because we are all still a great deal carnal minded!

Ask yourself; what sin could any other person commit against you that would hurt you the most? Think deeply about this because you may have to face this very thing to perfect your character. As long as things seem to be going smooth in our lives, it is easy to do the right thing. It is when we are faced with our worst fear that we are given the ultimate test, as to what our true character is. I have heard of many evils that have fell on other men's shoulders, which caused me to wonder if I could handle the situation in a Godly way if it had happened to me and my family. Brethren, God knows that for us to be given the responsibility, and power which he wants to give us; we must be thoroughly tested and tried while we are still flesh and blood.

God has caused me to thoroughly understand that his reason for determining that the wages of sin is death is an act of mercy to us and all others also. Just to be alive is not good enough. Life can be wonderful, and good if we can live the way that God and Christ live, but to live contrary to God's way of love, as is outlined in the Ten Commandments, as they are hung on the two Great Commandments, would eventually produce such pain, agony mental torment, and anguish of heart for our self, as well as for others, that life would become a curse. People who commit suicide have often felt the sorrows, and tasted of the bitter gall of sin. Only those ignorant people don't see any light at the end of the tunnel. We true Christians do know that there is hope in God and his way, because God has miraculously revealed it to our minds, so we don't give up, but the people who don't know God, and can't see a way that they can fix their problems, often realize that death is better than life in a tormented state, with no hope. Brethren, this is why God wants us to repent of, and stop all sin in our lives.

If I were talking to you in person, you might defend yourself, and tell me that you have repented of all your sins. Remember this one thing brethren; God knows your heart, and the sins of your mind better than you do, and you yourself could probably look deep in your own mind and find sins that no one but God ever sees. Actions begin with a thought. When we are born again as Spirit living children of God, we must, for our own good, as well as for the good of others be perfect, and without sin. Otherwise death would be better than life. God can make us this holy if we desire it enough to let him. That is why God purges us who are already bringing forth fruits of righteousness.

Let me, by the Spirit of God point out an area that most of us must grow more in: **Forgiving others of their trespasses against us.** But first of all we need to consider how important it is to forgive others. We must forgive others, not just so that we can be forgiven of God. Why do you think that God made it a prerequisite for us to be forgiven, that we forgive others **from the heart?** Consider this brethren: Right now the Kingdom, or family of God consist of two beings, God the Father, and Christ the son, but soon the family will consist of

thousands of us, who will then be born again children of God. All of us who will make up the one hundred and forty four thousand first fruits into the kingdom, have committed sins against God, but we also all have committed sins and trespasses that hurt one another, and we have did evil and hurt against other people on this earth who will also become born again children in the family of God when he calls them. How could the family of God live in peace if we don't learn to forgive all people of all their hurtful sins against us? Yes, the family of God will mostly be made up of former sinners. We may not feel the pain and anguish that we brought on others by our sins, but they did. When we begin to suffer the pains and sorrows that we have caused others, then we can see just how evil we were. I have come to learn that, that is how God brings about a deeper repentance in his saints: he lets us experience the bitterness of sin that we have caused others in the past. Yes, when God calls us to judgment, it is a living growing, learning, repenting, and heart changing process. Some of the experiences that we must go through are very painful, yet it is most necessary for our growth into sons of God. That is what Jesus meant when he said that it would be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the judgment than for a city that rejects Christ and his apostles: for they would be doing wonders in their midst which would prove that they were from God. (Mark 6: 10-23) The Judgment is a period of time when people are called to face the truth and repent, and to learn and get to really know God. Then they can choose good or evil with their eyes open. They will also be rewarded according to their works in judgment. God is very merciful though, and he doesn't throw all of our sins in our face at once, but little by little he helps us to repent deeply and overcome all unrighteousness in our hearts and minds. For God to forgive us so that we can live, we must also forgive others. Otherwise there would not be true love and peace in the kingdom. God will not have anything less! If we want to live, we must forgive.

You can ask yourself: what would be the hardest sin for me to forgive? You may very well be tested in that area of your Christian life. We must remember, if we really have deep love and respect for what God has in store for us, we cannot let anything separate between us and God. If we can't at first forgive, then we must draw much closer to God and let him give us the divine power to forgive.

This could be a struggle that could last a long time, *I know*, but God won't fail you. Don't fail God and yourself.

Consider this: what if someone murdered your child or a close friend, or a brother, then later repented. Could you forgive such a person? Probably not, but you must. Consider what the Apostle Paul did to Steven and other brethren. Even Steven forgave them, before they repented. Steven understood that they were ignorant of God, and therefore they did this evil, even as we were ignorant of God when we were committing grievous sins against God and people. God didn't hold our sins against us, with a bitter heart, but rather he went ahead and called us to the truth even as he had planned, from the foundation of the world. What love and mercy God has had on us! Could we be the children of God unless we also show this love and mercy to those who have sinned against us?

You can consider for yourself what would be the hardest sin for you to forgive, and then know that you must be able to forgive him or her of it. **Only God has the right, and love and wisdom and knowledge to condemn the wicked to eternal death. Vengeance belongs to God, not men.** Know that God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that they would repent and live. (Ezek. 33: 11) God will bring even the most wicked people to repentance if it is possible, because God is a God of love, and mercy, who is more than willing to forgive, in order that we who were enemies may come to really know God and his righteousness, and be his friends and loving family. What great Love and Mercy!

In order to forgive a person of some very hurtful offence against us we must realize that the sins people do against one another is done because of Satins evil influence on an ignorant and selfish, deceived people. When God causes them to realize that God is real and involved in their lives; and when they are able to see that their way in pursuit of happiness is wrong, and don't work, and then many will repent and hate the evil of their own selves and start obeying God. God and the holy angles will rejoice in their conversion, even as they did in our conversion. (Luke 15: 7) So must we, and so shall we if we are truly converted ourselves, for God has converted us to Love, mercy, and forgiveness, not hate and bitterness. You won't find any real happiness and peace of mind in vengeance, and hate

against those that God still loves. Our only hope is to be able by the Power, and Love of God to forgive, and hope for their good as long as God hasn't condemned them ultimately. They will be part of the God family someday, so forgive as Steven did, and as Christ did. If we refuse to forgive, we who have been called and did much righteousness, make ourselves the enemy of God. God doesn't condemn ultimately until they have rejected Christ after they have been illuminated by the Holy Spirit and refused to be corrected by God. Who are we to condemn? If it weren't for the love and mercy of God we also would be condemned. Do you realize that if God couldn't forgive, he couldn't reproduce his self? God would be righteous and just if he destroyed all of us, for we all have sinned, yet he would continue to be alone. God said of Adam that it is not good for the man to be alone, for God knows what it is like to be alone. Even after God created the angles, in a sense he was still alone, even as Adam was alone when he had all of the animals with him. The angles were created beings, but God desired a wife through whom he could actually reproduce himself, of his own seed. So in type God made a wife for Adam out of his own flesh and bone, just like the church, Christ's future wife is being made of Christ's own Spirit and character. Bones are the physical character of the flesh, which is why no bone in Christ was broken. Christ's character was never broken even in all that he endured.

Now back to the point, for God to be able to reproduce himself it was necessary for him to make man of flesh with a human spirit in him, and capable of changing and also subject to death if he makes the wrong choice of living in sin. Then man did sin as God knew he would, but God purposed from the foundation of the world there, that he would let him try his way, as to decide for himself what he thought was right and wrong, good and evil: then God purposed that after man had come to learn that his way only produced evil, hurt, sorrow, pain, and anguish that God would call him and if he would repent, God would **forgive** him, and give him the Holy Spirit to beget him with a sound mind, and lead him out of all his sinful ways, so that he can be given eternal life in happiness, peace, joy, and unity with God himself, and his fellow brethren.

Yes, for God to reproduce himself it was necessary for God to let us sin and learn our lesson, then when God would cause his Spirit to act on us to bring us to

real repentance; then God would have to forgive us for our ungodly ways and sins. It was necessary for God to begin his children in a sinful state for us to truly learn and know that **only God is capable of rightly deciding what the right way to live is.** That way is the way of out flowing love and obedience to God above all else, and love for fellow man equal to self. Yes, for God to have a wife and children to share eternity with him, he has to be able to forgive.

Do you suppose that we could become born children of God and be unable to forgive when people repent? Absolutely not! We must, as God does, be able to forgive all sins against us. There is one sin that would be hardest of all to forgive, because it would hurt most of all sins. But for us to be the children of God, we must be able to forgive even that sin against us. That sin is when a beloved spouse has betrayed you and committed adultery. God will forgive them of that sin if they repent from the bottom of their heart. So must we. In a case where a spouse is continuing in this behavior, I wouldn't recommend staying in that marriage. But if it be repented of, whether it was of a long time ago committed or of fairly recent, but it is truly repented of, then you must learn to forgive it of them. You will be able to see by their fruits in their lives if they are truly repentant, or if they just got caught and are lying. If you truly are pleasing God yourself, he will help you to rightly judge. But remember, even if the spouse is not truly repentant now, they may come to be when God calls them. Don't let hate and bitterness take over your life. Read what God inspired the Apostle Paul to write in Hebrews 12: 14, 15. *"Follow peace with all, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of **bitterness** springing up trouble you, and **thereby many be defiled;**"* Yes it is possible that a person could be a converted Christian and still end up failing the grace of God! A root of bitterness could defile us if we let it. So when someone has sinned against you beware of this pitfall. We converted Christians have weaknesses that we may not be aware of, and God will purge us in these final days to make sure that we grow in to the fullness of the stature of Christ in character. (Eph. 4: 13) In Acts chapter 14 verse 22, Paul and Barnabas told the Christians that through much tribulation we must enter into the Kingdom of God. Brethren, more righteous men than us have suffered greater trials than

us. Do we think we deserve better than they? No, God will let us face whatever trials and tribulation that he knows that we need for us to reach the maximum character development possible for us.

You see brethren; God is not as limited as we may be, so that he has to see that our treasures in this world are what are most important. No, God sees things from a much higher and realistic point of view. You see, our money, our property, our wives, and all our worldly treasure should not be so important to us that we would let it hinder us from doing the perfect will of God. We should love our wives and family, and we should have proper respect for the material things that we have need of in this world, but our ultimate goal is to be a completely holy and righteous son of God, and to be counted worthy, by Gods grace to be given **real life**, of which this life we have now is only a type of. God will bring our wives, husbands, and children to repentance, and conversion in his own time, when he knows best, and not when we think it should be. God is in charge, not us; and that is a good thing. We must learn to love our unconverted mates, and children, but at the same time let go of them concerning trying to drag them into the Kingdom of God. God has a purpose to humble and bring to repentance all people, if at all possible, but in his own time. If we try too hard to force our loved ones in this world to be converted according to our own self desire: it may hinder us from being able to overcome and be in the Kingdom of God ourselves. We must learn from our Fathers example: to love them while they are still living according to the course of this present world, and patiently wait for God to bring them to repentance in his own proper time. God didn't love or approve of the way we were living and thinking before we were converted, but he did love us enough to call us out of our sins and give us his Holy Spirit when the time was right in our lives. He loves us enough to let his only offspring, his own son be sacrificed to pay the death penalty that we all deserved, so that we may live, if so be that we will surrender and let his son Jesus Christ live in us, and lead us out of the way of sin. So we must love the uncalled, unconverted of this world, even our own families. This requires that we be able to forgive and love, because of their potential, and not just expecting perfection now. Remember God wants us to be

holy like he is. If we really are the offspring of God then we will gladly accept this characteristic in our lives also.

God hates sin, so should we; it is our enemy, but God loves his potential children. Most people have not really had an opportunity to know God; many will repent and learn to love when God illuminates their minds and hearts with the real truth. Great sorrow lies ahead for this whole world, but through it many sinners will repent and be welcomed into the beloved family of God, when they are begotten by the very Spirit of God entering in to their hearts and minds. If we can't forgive and love, then we disqualify ourselves to be a son of God. God help us understand the seriousness of this matter! We should not reject someone whom God loves and hopes for. We should consider the parable of the prodigal son.

Satan has deceived this whole world into living in a very selfish, greedy, and lust filled way, all in their pursuit of happiness; but soon God will remove all cloaks, and the truth will stand clear, that all sin only produces hurt, pain, and unhappiness, and sorrow, which far outweighs the selfish pleasures of sin. And brethren, for us to fail to be, as forgiving, and merciful as God is, is only sin. Whatever is not of love is sin. God only can determine if a person has failed the grace of life, and he will destroy the wicked out of love and mercy to the rest of the God family, and even mercy to save the wicked from their own tormented minds. So we have no excuse not to love Gods people. Hate the sin, but love the people. Don't bear a grudge, but forgive as God does, and love as God does.

In order for us to be able to forgive as God does requires that we learn to see things more from Gods perspective. We live on a round sphere that we call earth, which is out among thousands of other ones, in the blackness of eternal space, and is held up in its orbit only by the power, and design of Almighty God. No matter how important we may think we are, or how important our hopes, dreams and desires are: we must be like little grasshoppers or less to God, except for his purpose for us. The troubles and things of this world are not worthy to be compared to what God has in store for his children who love him and his way of life. Soon we will look back and consider that all of the suffering that we endured

in this life was of as little concern as the troubles we suffered in our mother's womb and in child birth: insignificant compared to what is before us. We must set our hearts on the things of God, not of this present world. We are living in the last days in this world. It is about time to be born, very soon. Hold on to Christ and his way of life, for we shall soon reap our reward. Settle it in your hearts to let Christ be more perfectly formed in you than ever before. You won't be sorry.

One bit of understanding that we need to keep in mind to help us forgive is this: When God calls a person and he or she truly repents, and surrenders to God, then that person is a fetus growing into a Child of God. God doesn't expect instant perfection, no more than an expectant mother or father would expect complete maturity as soon as we beget a child. God is patient, so must we be. And remember God will eventually make his calling available to all, even to the very wicked people. Christ said he didn't come to call the righteous to repentance, but the sinner. (Mark 2: 17) To be able to forgive wicked people who have wronged us; remember, God will give them his Holy Spirit when they repent, and it will cause them to continually grow and change into a Godly and Holy son of God. He or she will no longer be wicked! We can't hold their wicked ways against them, for God has completely changed them into a new person. They will also hate their former self! Not only you, but they will then also hate their former evil deeds! They are changed and no longer evil. If we hate and bear a grudge against those that God loves and has cleaned up; how can we be a child of God? No, as Jesus said, we must forgive them from the heart. God will not tolerate sin forever, but until God undeceives them and leads them to repentance, he allows it for our own good, that we may learn the evil, and harm of sin. I don't think any of us can honestly claim that we have never hurt, and harmed others by our own sins; can we? Aren't we glad that God doesn't hold our evils against us forever, even after we repent? To be the children of God, we must show the same mercy to others that sin against us. Steven understood this, and prayed that God would not hold it against those people who were killing him. We must be likewise. We are still a great deal carnal and when we look on a person's fleshly body we tend to have them sized up based on their former conduct. God doesn't judge the flesh but the spirit. God looks on the heart and

judges rightly. I believe that If you are honest that you also are glad that God doesn't look on your flesh and say, that is the wicked person that did this or that (*your sins*). God looks on your heart, and what you are like now, and what you can become, (*like Christ*). When God gives his Holy Spirit to a person it really does change the person in their heart and mind, the human spirit being led by the Holy Spirit becomes completely different, and grows into a Holy child of God. Surely we who are converted can see that we must forgive those who have, and are sinning against us in the same manner that God does. God loved us while we were yet sinners: he didn't love or approve of our evil ways, but he did love us, and **did not hate us**, for he had his son Jesus die for us, and also he called us to repentance in his own choice of time.

Know this brethren, God only, has the wisdom, understanding, and prerogative to condemn the wicked to eternal death. Unless, or until God totally condemns a person to eternal death, then we should love them as God does. I know, this is not humanly possible, but it is Devine, and possible only by the wisdom, and power of God in us. Do we think that God has called us to something less than to be Devine, and Holy, and Perfect? God will continue to purge us that we may take on the characteristics of God. Your reward, glory, and power in the kingdom requires it. Thank God that he doesn't just give in to us when we whine and cry, but he keeps in mind, what really is good for us, like a good parent. Finally brethren, remember, time is shorter than most think, we shall soon reap our reward in the kingdom of God if we don't faint. Words can't describe how awesome it will be!

I Gary Stowers have written this, by the inspiration of the Spirit of God for all of our good. I hope to be soon united with all of Gods faithful saints and Christ our Lord. I hope you are able to value this truth.

A true friend and witness of God and Christ,

Gary Stowers